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(Photo by Stuart's Studio)

Local Legion Branch Hosts District "E"

More than 125 Legionnaires from 48 branches in four zones were hosted by Richmond Hill Branch 375 Royal Canadian Legion last Saturday for the District "E" convention. Included in the delegates and their guests were District Commander Alex Rees of Gravenhurst, Honorary Treasurer Provincial Command George Laughlin of St. Catharines and Provincial 2nd Vice-President Bob Jeffries of Bracebridge, as well as the four zone commanders — Frank Barrott, Richmond Hill, E-2; Danny Rolph, Mono Mills, E-3; Hugh Taylor, Orillia, E-4; and Art Coon, Gravenhurst, E-5.

District "E" reaches from Steeles Avenue as far north as Mactier and as far west as Orangeville.

The day-long business session began at 9:45 am, with the members of the local Ladies' Auxiliary catering for a bountiful luncheon. Each Legionnaire received a gift from Richmond Hill's newest industry, a package of Reynolds' wrap, a pack of cigarettes (Export), matches and a ballpoint pen.

The happy group above at the luncheon table are (left to right) Hon. Provincial Command Treasurer George Laughlin, President Douglas Hopson of the host branch and District Commander Alex Rees.

Richmond Hill Council Pares 1.25 Mills From 1970 Budget In Day-Long Session

By MARY DAWSON

At 9:30 am when the day-long budget session of council in finance committee of the whole began to consider the 1970 budget, the total of all budgets submitted totalled \$4,410,855.94, a substantial increase from the \$4,111,363.64 budgeted in 1969 and even more substantial than the \$4,022,300.61 actually spent last year. Reeve Donald Plaxton described this total as "Utopia" but warned council, the final amount must lie within the ability of the town's ratepayers to pay.

Of this amount council has no control over the county levy of \$380,403.83 (\$369,241.91 in 1969), the education levy of \$1,099,066.82 for public schools (\$993,979.38 in 1969) and \$920,048.93 for high schools (\$884,656.95 last year) or the police budget of \$376,226.45 (\$288,400 in 1969).

One mill will raise \$124,000 in taxes in 1970.

It was noted that Richmond Hill ratepayers are again penalized this year in the county rate and the educational levy. Because the statutes require county taxes to be based on the assessment made in 1968, Richmond Hill will continue to pay 12% of the county budget, although last year's county assessment revealed that the town should be responsible for only nine percent of that budget. If the 1968 assessment could have been used, the county levy on the town would have been only \$285,000.

Similarly in the education budget, York County Board of Education, to soften the blow for other communities, decided to allocate its budget, 70% on the 1969 assessment and 30% on the 1968 assessment.

Considering each item of each budget, council pared \$100

\$133,971 before they recessed for dinner. They were back on the dais by 7:30 and continued their deliberations until 20 minutes past midnight, when they had pared still further to a total of \$176,889.82.

The spectre of the imminence of regional government hung over the meeting and influenced many decisions. Richmond Hill Public Library suffered a \$9,000 cut in budget, but \$3,000 was granted for the Youth Aid Centre to help young people with problems and \$2,500 was allocated for the Richmond Hill and Area Family Services. An attempt to allocate \$1,500 each to Union Villa and Blue Hills Academy was unsuccessful, since the majority of council felt that support of both should be at the county level.

Reeve Plaxton and Deputy-reve Ivan Mansbridge, the town's representatives on county council, promised to try to have the question re-opened. They reported the sum of \$10,000 each had been included in the county's budget, but had been removed and held in reserve. "If the Southern Six had voted solidly for the grants, they would have carried, since the northern municipalities were split," it was reported.

The vote was close — 16-12. "The voter was close — 16-12," Treasurer Mack Clemeant predicted that he would be a bearer of unexpected gifts, when he revealed a treasure trove existed in three separate accounts. With interest of more than \$5,000,

the balance remaining in the No. 3 Account, made up of lot fees a decade ago had reached \$18,536.84. It was agreed that the parks development budget which had been cut down from \$50,000 to \$6,850 be increased by \$11,350 and that \$18,200 of the No. 3 Account

40% Less Schoolchildren

High Rise Buildings Cut School Tax

High-rise apartment development brings large increases in traffic and population densities.

But town house development on the same amount of land hikes the school population about 40% more.

This according to a report to Markham Township Planning Board last week.

Being considered was an application by Costain Estates Limited for a condominium town house project on part of a property at the northwest corner of Bayview Avenue and Royal Orchard Boulevard in Thornhill. The planners are going ahead with the application.

The firm proposes to develop the westerly 3.5 acres of the property with a 62-unit project. The corner would be left free for a possible high-rise apartment building.

The whole property is zoned RM3 (third density multiple family residential) and the own-

Predict Education Tax Jump As School Budget Is Up 16%

By MARGARET LADE

When York County Board of Education last week approved a \$34.8 million operating budget for 1970, it also gave an indication of how this will affect the average taxpayer. The budget represents a jump of 16 percent over last year's total of \$30,095,559.

Although the board is responsible for all public schools in the county, each of the 14 municipalities is responsible for its own share of the overall budget, and with assessment now a provincial, not a municipal affair, the increases will vary widely, ranging from an estimated increase of 6.79 percent in Woodbridge to an increase of 20.55 percent in East Gwillimbury Township.

It was pointed out, however, that part of the brunt of the increases will be shared by the province. Education Minister William Davis has agreed to provide subsidies where the increase is greater than the equivalent of one half an "equalized mill."

In Richmond Hill, this comes to 1.85 mills, and in Markham Township is 4.45. Other municipalities fall in between.

New development has resulted in a six percent increase in enrolment and accounts for about \$1.3 million of the \$4 million increase in budget over 1969, explained Business Superintendent George Ford, but the burden on the home owner will be heavier because of the change in method of assessment.

The change to assessment by market value of properties will, on the other hand, mean that industries and businesses will be paying a smaller share of the cost of education than they paid in 1969.

Although it was stressed that it is up to the municipalities, not the board, to strike the mill rate, the board included in its budget report an estimated comparison of 1969 and 1970 taxes on residential properties.

Actual homes standing on less than one acre of land were used for samples, said Mr. Ford.

Since assessment this year is based on market value, the board then listed estimated taxes for 1970 for a home valued at \$20,000. He pointed out that it is obvious that the \$20,000 house in Richmond Hill will not be the same type of house that would sell for that amount in Georgina or North Gwillimbury.

Using the hypothetical home assessed at a market value of \$20,000 the board predicts an increase of 7.37 percent in education tax in Richmond Hill — from \$308 in 1969 to \$331 in 1970 — about \$23.

In Vaughan Township the predicted increase is 16.6 percent, from \$213.52 to \$249 — a total of \$35.48.

Markham Township can anticipate an increase of 16.9 percent in education taxes — about \$35 on the \$20,000 home. Tax hikes in Aurora and Newmarket for a residence that has the same market value will be about \$31, and in East Gwillimbury, it will be a whopping \$49.

King and Whitechurch Townships are also in the upper increase bracket and can anticipate jumps of about \$42 in the education tax on the \$20,000 home.

In Woodbridge the increase will be a mere \$19 and in Sutton about \$29. In Stouffville, the homeowner in this bracket can look forward to an increase of about \$48, and in the Town of Markham, an increase of \$39.

North Gwillimbury fares better, with a predicted increase of 14.3 percent, or about \$29, and in Georgina Township the jump will be about \$23.62, with the owner of the \$20,000 home paying \$187.60 in school taxes in 1970 compared to \$163.98 in 1969.

Apparent discrepancies, ex-

plained Mr. Ford, were due to fluctuations in the mill rate as a result of equalized assessment across the province and in the mill rate subsidy which will be applied to some municipalities and not to others.

Provincial grants will account for \$15,133,471 of education revenue, and mill rate subsidies for \$1,560,223 for a total of \$16,693,694 from the province.

Municipal tax levies for education total \$17,675,108. The remainder comes from tuition fees from other boards who have students attending schools in the county, night school fees, driving course fees, rentals charged for use of school facilities, individual tuition fees and "sundry revenue."

The whole grant structure has changed, explained Education Director Sam Chapman. Boards used to receive additional "incentive grants" for setting up and operating commercial and technical courses and special classes for the deaf. Now all grants are the same.

There is a danger, he said, that expensive courses, such as vocational classes, and handicapped children, may be in jeopardy if there are serious cut-backs in budget.

When the grant structure was adjusted in 1961, he said restructuring placed emphasis on education for employment, giving large capital grants for vocational schools and expensive technical and commercial equipment.

"Now," said Mr. Chapman, "the department is taking a different stance."

Some trustees were very critical of the schedule of subsidies, which gives Markham Township a 22.6 percent subsidy for elementary schools and 31.8 for secondary schools, while Richmond Hill gets only an 8 percent subsidy for elementary schools and nothing for secondary schools.

Other municipalities fall in between, with Vaughan Town-

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Housing Productivity Is Goal Of Markham Move

Barriers to speedy development of housing and other projects are being broken down in Markham Township.

And some of the money developers save is being diverted to lift municipal planning costs from the backs of the ordinary taxpayers.

This will allow the township to increase its planning staff as fast as the work load grows.

It is hoped it will be possible to give immediate attention to all development plan applications.

Markham Township Planning Board began putting this new policy into effect January 1.

The full outline of the new policy became evident last week as planning board completed its work on the 1970 budget, and sent it on to township council.

There is provision for the hiring of an additional senior planner at a salary in the vicinity of \$14,000. Applicants have been considered and it is possible someone will be hired almost immediately.

The summer staff will be augmented by taking on some summer students taking courses in the planning field, possibly from the Ryerson Institute of Technology.

A new fee schedule for development applications went into effect at the first of the year. It is expected that application revenues will carry about a \$35,000 portion of a 1970 planning budget of about \$68,000.

The planning budget is being hiked nearly \$20,000. The load on township taxpayers will be reduced about \$15,000, hopefully without any additional cost to anybody.

In fact, Markham Township development productivity could be improved to such an extent that developers' savings will be several times the amount of the new fees being charged. This was the opinion of one developer in discussion with planning officials last week.

Most of the planning board budget is for salaries, with this item totalling close to \$59,000. This year's salary of Planning Director and Secretary-Treasurer Kunio Hidaka is being raised from last year's \$18,500 to \$20,000.

Besides the new senior planner, the planning staff includes a planning assistant, junior draftsman, secretary and clerk-stenographer.

Councillor James Jongeneel, a member of the planning board and of the township's finance committee, explained at last week's meeting that the total amount of the planning budget was subject to council review, but that council doesn't interfere with how the board allocates its funds for any particular budget item.

The budget includes \$3,200 for office supplies and equipment, up about \$250 from 1969. Staff mileage and travelling expenses are expected to total \$750 in 1970, just about double the amount for 1969.

The budget for planning

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One More Delay Yonge St. Traffic

Yonge Street traffic will be restricted for only one more short period at the present time, Works Commissioner Otto Whalen told Richmond Hill Town Council at its March 26 meeting. The restriction would be necessary for only a couple of days while the excavation for the storm sewer serving Centre Street West is made, he said.

His statement came during discussion of a letter from President Stan Currie of the Richmond Heights Centre Merchants Association, representing 50 businesses.

Mr. Currie stated his association is well aware that reconstruction of Yonge Street will bring about a decrease in business during the period of construction and that the Centre merchants are prepared to spend more monies on promotion and advertising to bring in and hold their present patrons. He pointed out that these merchants require as much access to the Centre as is possible at all times, without holding back progress on the project.

He suggested the north detour sign be brought down to Crosby Avenue and that the signs be pulled to the side of the road Thursday and Friday nights and all day Saturday when no work would be underway on the project.

He reported that on March 14, a count showed that coming from the north, nine out of every 14 automobiles turned off Yonge Street at the detour sign at Elgin Mills Road.

Mr. Whalen told council that he had acted quickly when the letter was received and the contractor had co-operated in getting the barricades out of the way, especially on the weekends.

He agreed to write a letter to Mr. Currie giving these facts, but added, "By the time he gets the letter I hope to be through."

Provincial Officials Say Risk Is Negligible

Pollution Bomb Sited In Whitechurch Contains Years Of Fluid Waste For Half Ontario

By HAROLD BLAINE

A huge multi-million gallon pollution bomb of unknown content is sitting and still growing beside Highway 48 in York County's Whitechurch Township.

The bottom of it is approximately 70 feet above the water table and it is about 7,000 feet from the wells that supply water to thousands of people in Stouffville.

Only earthen embankments are keeping it out of a swamp which may be the headwaters of the Holland or Rouge Rivers.

It is the Bremner Dump and the only known disposal location for industrial fluid wastes for Metropolitan Toronto and an area from Hamilton to Collingwood and Oshawa.

Provincial government officials think the possibility this pollution bomb will explode is extremely remote and the danger is negligible.

But they aren't sure!

Fearful ratepayers in the neighborhood recently met and de-

manded the dumping be stopped. They want assurances in writing that there will be no water pollution from the dump, now or in the future.

One neighbor complains the windows of his home must be kept closed during sleep at night, in case fumes from dumped acids and other chemicals float in the direction of his property.

Until recently, no record whatsoever was kept of what chemicals were being dumped.

The admittedly highly dangerous fluids are contained in natural holes in the ground called kettles. These holes were left in the last glacial period when earth piled up around huge pieces of ice and then the ice melted away.

Provincial officials from the Waste Management Section of the Department of Energy and Resources Management last week explained the situation to Whitechurch Township Council and representatives of Metro and Holland Valley Conservation Authorities.

Representatives of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture in York County also attended.

At this time Director of Waste Management John Heaman could report only promises that something would be done about the dump and the pollution control problems it presents.

Further test holes are to be dug, he said, with the permission and co-operation of the dump owner Bremner Ltd. But there is now no provincial regulatory power, although some new legislation is promised at this session by Minister of Energy and Resources Management George Kerr.

Mr. Heaman reported that pressures from industry to keep the dump open are immense, and wholesale layoffs of thousands of workers were threatened when the dump was closed for a short period last December.

Members of Whitechurch Township last week appeared to agree they could see no way for the municipality to force closure of the

dump as long as the province operated by supplying experts and data in the event of a court case.

Deputy-revee Norman Barnard said the municipality had tried going to court about gravel pits, but lost its case and the money spent. This was because evidence and experts controlled by the province, were withheld. He said there was no use having the municipality go through this kind of punishment again.

Councillor Merlyn Baker, who has spearheaded efforts to air the dump issue in council, indicated he felt the provincial government was stalling and equivocating over the issue because of pressure from industrial interests.

He charged provincial experts had drilled only one dry test hole near the kettle where most of the fluid industrial waste had been dumped. He alleged most of the test holes have been drilled near a kettle that contains mostly Whitechurch Township domestic gar-

bage.

Councillor Baker charged that Waste Management Director Heaman had wasted his time by coming to the meeting, told the council nothing new, and gave no guarantee the dump was safe.

Reeve Stewart Burnett disagreed. He said Mr. Heaman hadn't entirely wasted his time, and did explain to the council that the risk was negligible.

Mr. Heaman really didn't tell council members anything new, except that new legislation was promised by the minister. Information provided previously in council was again provided by Mr. Heaman. This time it was first-hand and in greater detail. The problems faced by the province in waste management were presented. Prospects for new developments to replace the dump were outlined. A pioneer fluid waste disposal operation near Sarnia was described.

Mr. Heaman promised more test holes would be drilled as soon as weather permitted. For the first

time these test holes will be drilled all the way under the dump, in an attempt to make more certain that the soil around the kettles is impermeable and that none of the juices are escaping and polluting the underground water.

The berms, or tanks of earth holding in the fluid wastes, are to be made stronger as soon as weather permits. This is to further decrease the danger a heavy rainstorm might breach the banks and release a flood of poisonous fluid waste.

"I know I'm speaking for Whitechurch. There's going to be an uproar such as never has been heard before," said Councillor Baker.

Reeve Burnett disagreed. He said it wasn't all of Whitechurch that was complaining. For instance, the people on Bayview weren't saying anything. It was just the people in the area of the dump.

Councillor Baker said there was a ratepayers' meeting. Councillor Gordon Ratcliffe

added that the Holland Valley Authority representatives had shown they were concerned, along with the agriculture federation pollution committee representative.

Deputy-revee Barnard said the whole thing was a real can of worms. He noted that the December closure of the dump was apparently done voluntarily by the owners. He said maybe voluntary closure could be obtained again. He felt the way Councillor Baker was proceeding was no way to get voluntary co-operation.

Councillor Baker said he could see no reason why there ever had to be such dumping in Whitechurch Township. Industry should have been responsible for the proper disposal of wastes from the very beginning.

Reeve Burnett said the dump problem was another good reason for the comprehensive zoning bylaw being prepared for the township. "It will stop this kind of thing taking place. We'll have

(Continued on Page 4)